



State Representative

Mary Skinner

14th District



Keeping Washington On The Move!

THE TRANSPORTATION CRISIS


Although we don't have the same traffic congestion problems as Seattle (ranked as having the third worst traffic congestion in the nation), we understand the importance of moving people and products. The quality of life in the Yakima area is tied directly to a successful state transportation system.

We depend on keeping the passes open in the winter so goods and products can move between Yakima and the Puget Sound area. We know what it's like when the store shelves begin to get empty when the passes are closed.

Our agriculture community relies on a truck and rail transportation system to move apples, soft fruit and other products for export through the ports of Tacoma and Seattle. Upkeep of our bridges in the rural areas is vital to freight mobility and the prevention of weight limit restrictions which can force trucks to drive miles out of their way.

We know what it is like to wait in traffic for a stopped train in downtown Yakima because of our limited crossings. Imagine the frustration of our local police and firefighters trying to find access across the railroad in the event of an emergency.

Our state's economy, which is already showing signs of slowing, cannot thrive unless we make it easier, quicker and less expensive to get people and products where they need to go.



Metro Area	National Gridlock Rank	Worst Traffic by Size
Seattle-Everett	3 rd most congested	1 st among Large cities
Vancouver-Portland	8 th most congested	3 rd among Large cities
Tacoma	22 nd most congested	1 st among Medium cities
Spokane	59 th most congested	4 th among Small cities

Source: Texas Transportation Institute, 2001 Urban Mobility Study

Protecting taxpayers by putting efficiencies first

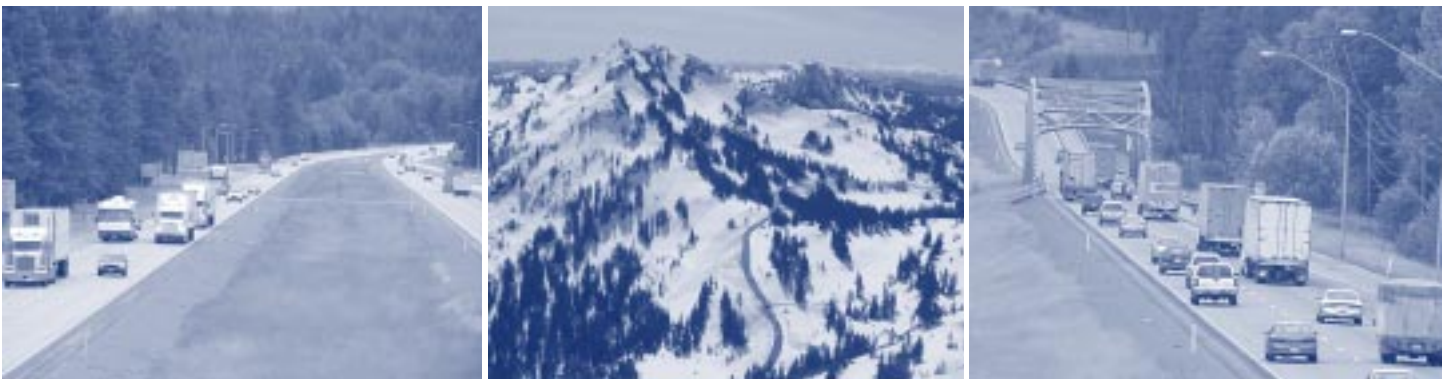
Bringing relief to congested roads and highways, improving safety and enhancing mobility throughout Washington remains one of my top priorities. There is much to be done — both to protect our families and our state's economy.

The state's Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation recently identified nearly \$150 billion in transportation needs over the next 20 years, of which only \$55 billion is funded, leaving a shortfall of \$95 billion. The commission said nearly half of this shortfall could be resolved by developing new approaches to traffic reduction and "by implementing aggressive efficiency measures."

Gov. Gary Locke is proposing to increase gas taxes up to 7 cents a gallon — an additional tax burden of \$185 annually for the average family of four. The House Democrat transportation plan would increase those taxes even more — to \$272 annually.

As a member of the House Transportation Committee, I believe that until all possible efficiencies and savings have been identified and corrected, it would be inappropriate to further burden the citizens of this state with higher taxes. I feel it is important to protect the interests of taxpayers by putting efficiencies first.

The House Republican plan, which I support, potentially could save \$4 billion or more over 10 years.



THE HOUSE REPUBLICAN TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY & REFORM PACKAGE

Potential Taxpayer Savings: More than \$4 billion over 10 years

■ STREAMLINE THE PERMITTING PROCESS.
The Legislature, by approving some common-sense changes, could cut in half the length of time now required for the permitting process, and the overall cost of transportation projects could be cut up to 20 percent, according to estimates.

■ COMPETITIVE BIDDING TO PRIVATE SECTOR.
A 1998 audit of the Department of Transportation estimated that simply opening up routine highway maintenance work to contract competition could save taxpayers up to 10 percent on engineering, design work and routine projects.

■ REFORM PREVAILING WAGE LAWS. Current state laws result in having to pay the highest union wages from the largest city in a specific geographic area. Estimates indicate local governments, especially in rural areas, could free up hundreds of millions of dollars for additional transportation projects through “prevailing wage” reforms.

■ PRIORITIZE CRITICAL EMERGENCY RELIEF PROJECTS. Immediate relief to some of Washington’s most congested areas should be addressed without further delay. Traffic congestion is the number one factor threatening the quality of life for families in our state and hindering efforts to jump-start Washington’s economy.

For more information, please contact me toll-free at 1-800-562-6000!

What Do You Think?

This is YOUR money we are talking about. The decisions we make in the next few weeks in Olympia will affect our quality of life for years to come. I want to hear from you! Call or write my office with your thoughts and ideas about addressing our transportation crisis.

Olympia office:
434 John L. O’Brien Bldg.
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
360-786-7810
e-mail: skinner_ma@leg.wa.gov

Toll-free legislative hotline:
1-800-562-6000
TTY-TDD for the Hearing Impaired:
1-800-635-9993

Legislative information on the Internet:
<http://www.leg.wa.gov>
State government on the Internet:
<http://access.wa.gov>

Keeping Washington On The Move!

Keeping Washington On The Move!

PRESORTED
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
OLYMPIA WA
PERMIT NO 92

State Representative
Mary Skinner
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Printed on recycled paper